

### AVOCADO SCAB

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Avocado scab, caused by the fungus *Sphaceloma perseae* Jenkins, was first reported in Florida in 1918 (3). Since that time it has spread throughout the Florida avocado industry and is now ranked second only to *Cercospora* blotch in destructiveness (2). The disease may occur on young succulent fruit, shoot, and leaf tissue of susceptible varieties. 'Lula' is the most severely affected commercial variety grown in Florida (1).

**SYMPTOMS.** Disease symptoms appear on both leaf surfaces as small dark brown spots less than 1/8 inch (3 mm) in diameter (fig. 1). The lesions are slightly raised and elongated on leaf veins, petioles, and twigs. Spots on the fruit are raised, purple-brown to dark brown, and circular to oval (1,4). The spots eventually coalesce to form irregular cracked areas (fig. 2) which impair the appearance and provide access to rotting organisms such as the black spot fungus *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* Penz. (2). Scab itself does not affect the internal quality of the fruit.

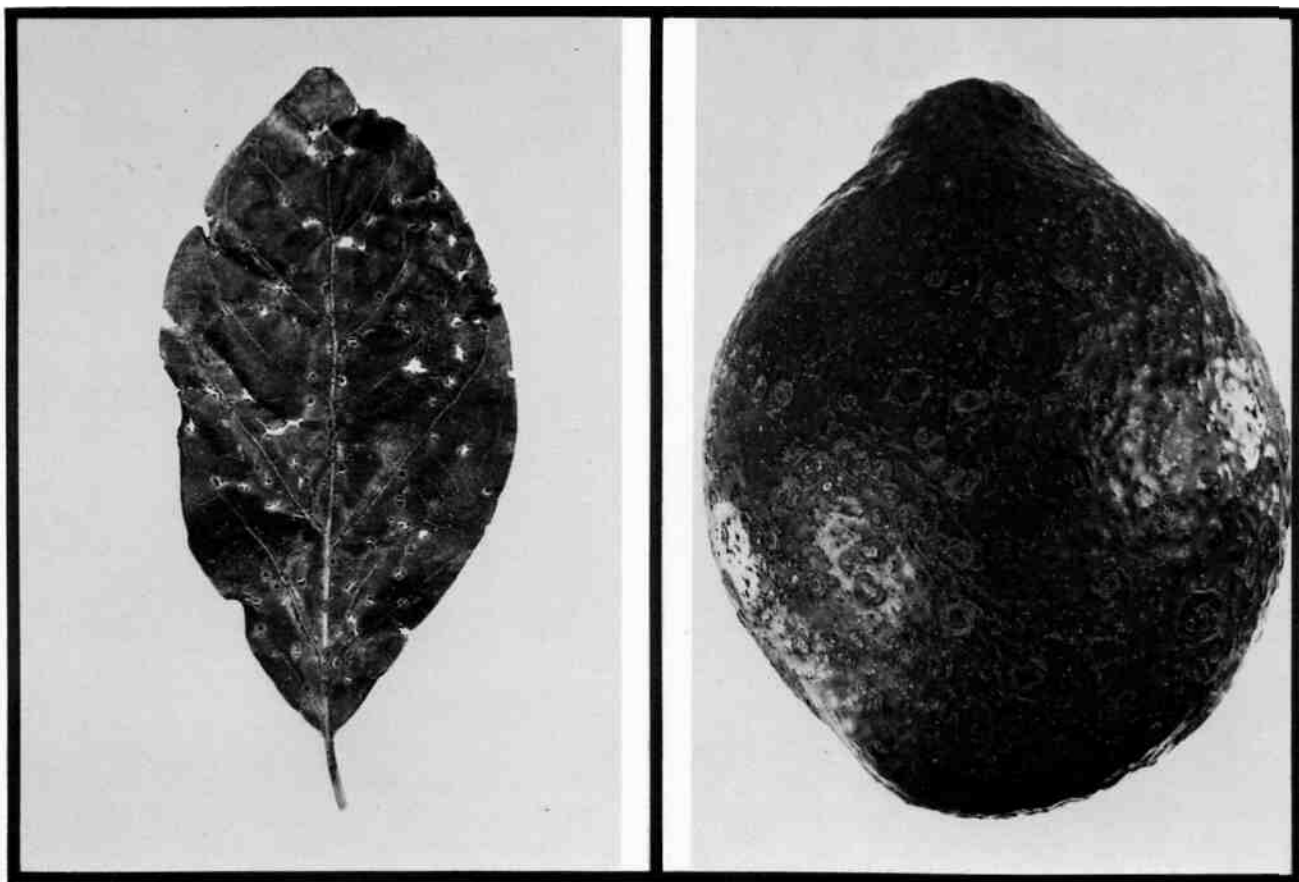


Fig. 1. Avocado scab, *Sphaceloma perseae*, on top leaf surface.

Fig. 2. Symptoms of avocado scab on fruit.

CONTROL. As with most other fungus diseases, avocado scab is controlled by protective fungicides (1). Basic copper sulfate (48-53% copper) at 4 lbs/100 gal water is suggested for control (4). One spray should be applied when bloom buds begin to swell, the second during late bloom when some fruit set has occurred, and the third 3 to 4 weeks later.

#### Literature Cited

1. Malo, S. E., and C. W. Campbell. 1972. The avocado. Univ. of Florida, Inst. of Food and Agr. Sci., Fruit Crops Fact Sheet No. 3. 4 p.
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3. Stevens, H. E., and R. B. Piper. 1941. Avocado diseases in Florida. U.S. Dept. Agr. Bur. Plant Ind. Circ. 582. 47 p.
4. Univ. of Florida, Inst. of Food and Agr. Sci. 1971. Plant disease control guide, p. III-2.